



LIBRARY

BOROUGH OF BODMIN

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE
Year ended 31st December, 1957.



PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health:
J. REED, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.

Surveyor and Chief Public Health Inspector:
C.R. LAWLESS, M.A.P.H.I., A.R.S.H.

Additional Public Health Inspector:
L.W. BLAKE, M.A.P.H.I., A.R.S.H.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have the honour to present the report for 1957.

In comparing the vital statistics it is better to note the actual numbers involved rather than the rates where small populations are concerned. The rates depend to some extent upon the estimated mid-year population, a figure given by the Registrar General. This appears to fluctuate widely from year to year for some extraordinary reason. The figures for the past 3 years have been 6,300, 5,970 and 6,530. The accuracy of any rates based on these figures is therefore questionable. 1957 saw an increase in the number of live births from 57 in 1956 to 82. The number of deaths among Borough residents was much the same as in 1956. We are also unfortunate in our death returns in having to include those deaths occurring at the Mental Hospital. The Registrar recently decided that deaths occurring in long stay hospitals within six months of admission need not be included. Since very few of these occur in St. Lawrence's this has affected our number of deaths very little. The determined death rate for 1957 is 35.3 - more than three times the rate for England and Wales!

On the Public Health side of the Council's work, the highlight of the year was the Public Enquiry held by the Minister's Inspector on the subject of increased water charges applied for by the Bodmin Waterworks Company. The Company were prepared to undertake certain permitted improvements in the supply provided higher rates could be charged. There could, of course, be no objection to this in principle, and all the Council could achieve was a slight reduction in the increases requested. The speed of improvement in consequence is likely to be slower. The lost opportunity in purchasing the undertaking some years ago becomes increasingly apparent as the formation of a Joint Water Board for the district approaches. The lack of agreement amongst the Authorities concerned on the formation of such an undertaking is discouraging. Although no urgency exists at the moment for such a step to be taken, it does appear to be inevitable, and to await the compulsion of the Minister is not in the best interests of Local Government.

In spite of the fact that the original Slum Clearance procedure in Downing Street was not followed, the Council have made commendable progress in its building programme. The financial restrictions of late have been a considerable deterrent to building and many Councils have ceased to build. The Council are to be congratulated in continuing, even on a modest scale under difficult conditions. I look forward to the greater replacement of old houses when conditions become favourable. It would be pleasant to see the Council undertake some redevelopment in the centre of the town. The food shops are essentially my concern and many of these are in old buildings unsuitable for adaptation to the hygienic standards required at the present time. The new shop to be constructed on the housing estate, although small, may give some indication of present day requirements.

Little progress has been made in ensuring that houses are provided with dust-bins of suitable type. Reminders to occupiers were distributed during the year, but little response was observed. It would be difficult to enforce the necessary provisions on private owners of property before the Council's house is first put in order. The provision of dustbins to Council houses is in my opinion a first and necessary step, and could be achieved without a great deal of expense.

One other important event which occurred in 1957, was the opening of Narisa Hall. The activities which take place in the new clinic are not the direct responsibility of the Council, but I must record my gratitude to Their Royal Highnesses Prince and Princess Chula Chakrabongse, and the Council for the delightful premises they have provided. I am sure that all my colleagues who work there would wish me to express their appreciation of the vastly improved conditions which we now enjoy.

I should also like to thank the Council for their help during the year, and in particular Mr. Lawless and Mr. Blake for their contributions to the report.

I beg to remain,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN REED

Medical Officer of Health.

1.. STATISTICS

General Statistics

Area in Acres	3,312
Estimated Mid-Year Population	6,530
Number of Inhabited Houses	1,520
Rateable Value	£66,129
Product of Penny Rate	£258
Comparability Factors :	
(a) Births	1.37
(b) Deaths	0.26

Vital Statistics

Live Births

Number of Registered Live Births 1957

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	41	39	80
Illegitimate	2	-	2
	43	39	82
Birth Rate per 1,000 population	= 12.6		
Birth Rate per 1,000 population England & Wales	= 16.1		
Comparable Birth Rate	= 17.2		

Stillbirths

Four stillbirths were registered - two of each sex.

Deaths

Infant Deaths

Two male infant deaths occurred, one of which occurred within the first month of life.

Number of Registered Deaths, 1957

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	103	127	230
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population	= 35.3		
Death Rate England & Wales per 1,000 population	= 11.5		
Comparable death rate	= 9.17		

The actual number of deaths registered relating to Borough residents was 58, of which 33 were male and 25 female. The main causes of death were as follows :-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Heart Disease	15	12
Cerebro Vascular Disease	1	2
Other circulating Diseases	-	-
Respiratory Diseases excluding Tuberculosis	6	3
Cancer	4	5
Accident	2	1
Other Causes	5	2
	<u>33</u>	<u>25</u>

2. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

Hospital Services

The immediate needs of the town are supplied by the East Cornwall Hospital, which also has Outpatient Departments for medical, surgical, chest and orthopaedic cases. Ante-natal and gynaecological patients are generally referred to a clinic held in St. Austell. An attempt to establish a similar clinic in the new premises at the Narisa Hall was unsuccessful following the observations of the local medical committee. A new physiotherapy centre was opened at the East Cornwall Hospital, built from funds raised by voluntary organisations. Its full benefit was not felt due to staff shortages.

The larger general hospitals at Truro, Redruth and Plymouth also serve the district.

The St. Lawrence's Hospital situated in the town caters for the admission and treatment of mentally ill patients for the County. Some of the older portions of the hospital have undergone structural alteration, redecoration and modernisation. High walls have been removed, and many wards unlocked giving certain patients the freedom of which they used to be deprived. Many changes for the better have occurred recently, parallel with a better understanding of the needs of the mentally ill. The improvements are likely to be extended during the next few years.

Laboratory services were available at the Royal Cornwall Infirmary, Truro.

County Council Services

Ambulance Service

A main centre station is situated in the town, the premises at present occupied being owned by the St. John Ambulance Brigade. Attempts to create a new centre with radio control have been hampered by the difficulty of finding a suitable site and building for adaptation. The service was adequate during the year.

Maternity & Child Welfare Services

Two district nurse midwives working in co-operation with the general practitioners provide the basis for ante-natal care, confinement and post-natal care. 51 domiciliary midwifery cases were conducted during the year. Both nurses are qualified in the use of gas and air analgesia. They also conduct classes in mothercraft in Narisa Hall, weekly or fortnightly, according to requirements. Health Visiting of children under 5 years is also carried out by them.

An Infant Welfare centre is held in the new premises at Narisa Hall twice each month. The function is essentially educational, and also provides immunisation services against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, smallpox and poliomyelitis. Dental services are provided in the Priory building for mothers and young children.

Home Help is supplied by the County Council, through a local organiser. The helps employed are all 'spare time'. Home Aid is available through the W.V.S. for persons receiving National Assistance grants and who require less than 8 hours domestic help per week.

School Health Services

The physical state of pupils attending Bodmin Schools was found to be satisfactory. The number of cases of mal-nutrition was very small indeed. The number of cases of serious physical defect was also negligible. School meals and milk were adequately provided during the year. Improvements to the central kitchen of the County Primary School, which were recommended by the Public Health Inspector, had not been undertaken by the end of the year. The sanitary provisions at all the schools are inadequate. The County Education Authority are doing what they can with available money to up-grade out of date systems.

3. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

Sewerage

During the year after considering a report by the Borough Surveyor giving a summary of faults at the Scarletts Well Sewage Disposal Works, further consideration was given to the sewerage of the whole Borough. These faults consisted of lack of screening, unusable detritus channels, inadequate storm water storage and sedimentation tanks with insufficient filter beds. In view of the magnitude of work required to rebuild these works the Council have engaged the services of Consulting Engineers, Messrs. Lemon & Blizard.

The Council also considered that the Westheath area should be catered for by a new sewage disposal works to be sited near Blowing House and a scheme was prepared but this has been held up by protracted negotiations for the site.

Water

A number of water samples have been taken during the year and have been found to be bacteriologically satisfactory. See Appendix II.

Public Conveniences

During the year the existing public conveniences at Free Library have been reconstructed on a very much higher standard. These conveniences together with recently erected conveniences at the Priory provide the town with excellent facilities both for local residents and visitors.

It is regretted that although the Council provide these facilities the amount of damage done in twelve months does not encourage any added facilities such as paper towel machines etc., being installed as the damage caused is considerable.

Refuse Disposal

Tipping was continued during the year on the southern side at Dragon Pits and due to the amount of soil etc., which was carted to the tip during the year, excellent cover was maintained and flies were practically eliminated. A constant check for rodents was maintained and periodic treatment given to the tip.

The provision of dustbins was requested in a circular letter to all owner/occupiers but met with a poor response. The collection could be run on more economic lines if adequate dustbins were provided and no doubt the streets at early morning, where kerbside collection is carried out, would look much more tidy with less paper and dust blowing around if adequately covered dustbins were provided.

Rodent Control

During the year treatments were carried out as follows :-

<u>Properties</u>		<u>Hours</u>	<u>Visits</u>
Private	26	99 $\frac{1}{2}$	89
Business	8	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	26
Council	4	24	12

Constant supervision was kept during the year but the rodent population of the Borough seemed to be almost completely wiped out.

Sanitary Inspections

(a) Summary of Visits

Council Properties	339
Private Houses	165
Food Premises	89
Slaughterhouses	272
Other Premises	433

(b) Notices Served

Housing Acts

Time and Place Notices (Sec 11)	9 properties
Demolition Orders	3 properties

Following Time and Place Notices, the Council accepted undertakings to repair and improve three properties, further two undertakings being accepted to use the premises as stores.

Public Health Act, 1936

Section 44 (Provision Closets)	2 properties
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<u>Informal Notices</u>	5 properties
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Pet Animal Act, 1951

The existing licence under the above Act was renewed during the year, the premises being visited on several occasions were always found to be kept in a satisfactory state.

Disinfestations

During the year two premises were treated for small infestation of fleas.

five

4. HOUSING

Downing Street

During the year the Council maintained progress in the acquisition of property in this area to facilitate redevelopment and during the year three additional houses were purchased. Negotiations were also successfully completed with regard to adjoining land to allow for the Council's redevelopment proposals to be started.

A further five houses were demolished and four new houses completed during the year, a start has been made on the Contract for six one-bedroom flats and tenders have been advertised for a further fourteen two and three bedroom houses.

It is hoped that the remaining eight properties on the west side of Downing Street can be acquired so that the redevelopment of this side of the street can be completed and a start then made on the eastern side.

General Housing

The Council's policy of building one-bedroom accommodation progressed steadily during the year at Rock Lane and a further nineteen bungalows were completed.

Houses Completed :	Council	19	(one-bedroom type)
		4	(two-bedroom type)
	Private	4	

Nine individual houses were dealt with under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Improvement Grants

During the year the Council received six applications for grants to improve premises and in five cases a grant was made, three properties receiving 50% grant and two properties a smaller grant, amounting to a total sum of £787.15.0.

Details of these applications are :-

Conversion of existing rooms to bathrooms together with drainage and hot water supply.	3
Erection of kitchen, bathroom, drainage and hot water supply.	2

Rent Act, 1957.

During the year three applications for Certificates of Disrepair were received and these three applications were still under consideration at the end of the year.

Housing Subsidies Act, 1936

During the year the necessary inspections were made to comply with the above Act and a further fifteen families were rehoused.

Moveable Dwellings

Two caravans were licensed under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, during the year.

With regard to the one licensed site in the Borough the standard on this site is rather low and during the year the owner was requested to carry out certain works which at the end of the year had not been started.

5. FOOD AND DRUGS

During the year the following food was voluntarily surrendered for condemnation :-

877	Tins (Various)
25	Jars (Various)
4	Jars Onions
4	Jars Beetroot
1	Jar Chicken Fillets
31	Bottles of Sauce
5	Drums of Pepper
7	Packets Cheese Portions
3½ lbs	Sliced Ham
6	Packets Rice
7	Packets Suet
3	Packets Biscuits
424 lbs	Currants
160 lbs	Apples
160 lbs	Cheese

Ice Cream

One new registration was made for the sale of ice cream making a total of 21 premises on the Register.

27 samples were taken during the year all of which were placed in Grade 1, a very satisfactory position indeed.

Only one Manufacturer has premises in the Borough but the cold mix ice cream proved of a very high standard.

Food Hygiene Regulations

In addition to the food premises detailed in 1956 report the following were opened during the year :-

Butchers	1
Greengrocers	1
Fish Store	1

Despite written and verbal warnings smoking during the handling of food continued in a few cases resulting in the Council prosecuting in one instance. The Court found this case proved and the defendant was fined £1.

Milks and Dairies

The following licences were operating during the year :-

Dealers Licences for Pasteurised Milk	6
Dealers Licences for Tuberculin Tested Milk	2

Premises in the Borough handling milk were visited and found satisfactory.

Slaughter of Animals

During the year two private slaughterhouse licences were renewed and seven licences to slaughter were issued under the Slaughter of Animals Act, 1954.

The following carcasses and offal were inspected :-

	1957	1956	1955
Cattle	227	215	183
Calves	19	11	5
Sheep and Lambs	510	546	269
Pigs	411	269	162

For details of condemnations see Appendix I.

6. FACTORIES

During the year 24 visits were paid to factories, there being 35 on the Register. In addition there are 2 outworkers in the Borough employed in altering wearing apparel.

Two notices were served under Section 7 during the year one of which had been complied with

eight

Notified Infectious Diseases, 1957

Mumps	2
Scarlet fever	3
Pneumonia	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	2
Whooping cough	1
Acute Encephalitis	1

The number of notified infectious diseases was small. No dysentery was notified from St. Lawrence's Hospital.

The contacts of the two new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were submitted for X-Ray and tuberculin testing, and vaccinated against the disease when required. All notified cases were visited and their contacts supervised. The Mass Radiography unit visited the town for the purpose of X-Raying the school children in their final year. No significant findings were reported. School children in their fourteenth year were offered tuberculin testing and B.C.G. vaccination. The response was good.

Immunisation against poliomyelitis continued on a small scale during the year, dependant upon the quantity of vaccine supplied.

Appendix I

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned
In Whole or in Part

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	227	Nil	19	510	411	Nil
Number inspected	227	Nil	19	510	411	Nil
<u>All diseases except</u> <u>Tuberculosis and</u> <u>Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	2	Nil	Nil	1	5	Nil
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci.	1.32	Nil	Nil	0.20	1.21	Nil
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	32	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	1.32	Nil	Nil	Nil	8.03	Nil
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Generalised and totally condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Appendix II

Water Sample Results 1957

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of Coliform Bacilli per 100 ml.</u>	<u>Number of Faecal Coli per 100 ml.</u>
25. 1.57	0	0
25. 1.57	0	0
25. 1.57	0	0
1. 3.57	0	0
1. 3.57	0	0
1. 3.57	0	0
1. 4.57	0	0
1. 4.57	0	0
1...4.57	0	0
4. 5.57	0	0
4. 5.57	0	0
4. 5.57	0	0
1. 6.57	0	0
1. 6.57	0	0
1. 6.57	0	0
28. 6.57	0	0
28. 6.57	0	0
28. 6.57	0	0
2. 8.57	0	0
2. 8.57	0	0
2. 8.57	0	0
2. 9.57	0	0
2. 9.57	0	0
2. 9.57	0	0
23. 9.57	0	0
23. 9.57	0	0
23. 9.57	0	0
4.11.57	0	0
4.11.57	0	0
4.11.57	0	0
30.11.57	0	0
30.11.57	0	0
30.11.57	0	0

